

There is presently sufficient funding to support a one-year pilot effort. The key to the ultimate success, longevity and transferability of the BERSEE project will be its ability to establish a system that is independently sustainable, based on ongoing contributions and sponsorships.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- ✓ Review your emergency response equipment inventory.
- ✓ Identify surplus items.
- ✓ When you update equipment in the future, consider donating replaced items to this program.
- ✓ Volunteer your time, funding, or expertise to help make this program a success.



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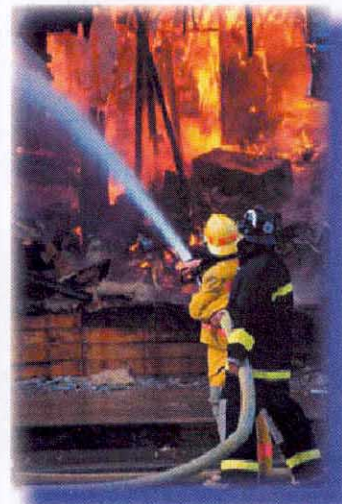


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U.S./MEXICO BORDER EMERGENCY RESPONSE SURPLUS EQUIPMENT EXCHANGE PROGRAM

for the
Arizona/Sonora & California/Baja California
Border Region



The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region IX is developing a much needed and precedent setting program to facilitate the exchange of used and surplus oil and chemical emergency response equipment in the U.S./Mexico border area. The Border Emergency Response Surplus Equipment Exchange (BERSEE) will meet an important need in the Arizona/Sonora and California/Baja California border area by facilitating the exchange of used and surplus emergency response equipment. It also meets the objectives of the recently signed U.S./Mexico Border 2012 Program to reduce border communities' exposure to chemical substances as the result of accidental releases and/or acts of terrorism.



A PRESSING NEED

Many border communities do not have adequate personal protection or emergency response equipment to protect the public health and the environment from accidental or deliberate releases of oil and hazardous materials. A major problem is that the equipment that many border communities possess is often outdated or in disrepair. Yet border cities are the most vulnerable to releases, given the high concentration of cross-border manufacturing operations found there as well as the constant transportation of hazardous materials through their communities.



While border communities struggle to operate with scarce resources, many larger communities throughout California and Arizona regularly dispose of used but perfectly serviceable equipment when they purchase newer models. Surplus equipment is often available from sources such as the military, federal and state agencies, businesses, cleanup contracting firms, and manufacturers; this program seeks to identify these sources of donations and pair them with those who need them.



THE GOAL

Connecting emergency responders in the U.S./Mexico border region with the sources of used and surplus emergency response equipment is the primary goal of the BERSEE project. By properly equipping emergency responders to handle oil and chemical emergencies, additional benefits include pollution prevention and the reduction of risk to public health from releases of toxic substances into the air and water.

It is hoped that this program can serve as a model capable of being duplicated or expanded throughout the U.S./Mexico border region.

THE PROGRAM

Initial funds are being used to hire a local emergency preparedness specialist to develop a web-based system to match used or surplus emergency response equipment and other relevant donations with communities that can use them. The primary recipients for this program will be the responders in the Arizona/Sonora and California/Baja California area. The program will include promotion and outreach to potential donors in Mexico, California and Arizona, such as larger fire departments, industry, military, manufacturers, and private sector emergency response departments.

The BERSEE Project Coordinator will create a web-based inventory of available donations, such as emergency response equipment, vehicles, clean-up and environmental monitoring equipment, personal protection gear, and training, educational and reference materials. An Internet/e-mail access and/or toll-free system for inventory donations will also be created. The program is expected to be operational by late 2003.

